

Sanitation: A Must-Have for Your Resort and Your Pest Management Program

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It goes without saying that effective sanitation at your resort is a must. Your guests expect it, and will be happy with nothing less than the best. But in addition to exceeding the expectations of your guests, good sanitation can also prevent pests from doing costly damage to your facilities and to your resort's reputation. With summertime and summer pests just around the corner, spring is the perfect time to ensure that you're making the most of your sanitation program as a pest prevention tool.

First, let's look at why pest management can be challenging in the resort industry. Insects and rodents aren't coming to your resort for the pool or the golf course like your paying guests. They're almost always there in search of four things: food, water, shelter and optimal

temperatures. The real challenge for resorts is that food and moisture sources are almost everywhere. Restaurants and snack bars are only the beginning – the 24-hour room service found in many resorts offers pests a food source throughout the hotel. Leaky ice machines or laundry facilities can provide more than enough moisture and warmth to sustain infestations. Even your guests and employees could unknowingly carry "hitchhiking" pests in on their clothes.

That's why sanitation is such a vital part of an Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, program. Effective sanitation removes as many potential food and water sources as possible, making your resort much less attractive to invading pests.

So, if we're looking for potential food and water sources that could attract pests, where is the best place to start? The number one spot to focus on is your foodservice kitchen – home to good smells and good food.



Though pests can climb walls, the floor will be the table of choice for many pests. Are there food scraps on the floor? Are there leaks or spilled water near dishwashing machines? Sinks? Refrigerators? Freezers? Clean up all food and water spills, and contact a maintenance professional to make any necessary repairs. Also, clean floor drains on a regular basis to eliminate any residual organic material. Consider using an organic cleaner, which will thoroughly eliminate any debris on which drain or fruit flies could feed.

Next, take the search for food and water to the rest of your establishment. Pay special attention to community areas and laundry facilities, which can provide moisture and warmth for pests. In addition to cleaning up spills, make sure your staff is thoroughly vacuuming carpets to remove any debris that may attract insects or rodents.

Once you have made sure that the interior of your resort is free of food and water sources, look outside. The odors from garbage are very attractive to pests, so tightly line and seal all garbage cans. Dumpsters



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should be placed as far away from the building as possible and rotated and cleaned frequently. Also, regularly hose down the parking lot and sidewalks outside your resort. By removing any elements that could alert pests to the presence of food and water inside, you'll reduce the chance that they'll venture near your building in the first place.

The key to a successful sanitation program is your staff. Discuss the expectations of the sanitation program with your staff. Your pest management professional can help explain the connection between sanitation and pests and the effect of your staff's work. It's a group effort, but in the end the benefits will be worth it – fewer pests and a sparkling resort. Who could ask for anything more?

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